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**PATENT**

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE  
BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES**

Application Number: 10/720,404

Filing Date: 11/24/2003

Applicant(s): Christopher Hyland and Fernando Salazar

Entitled: USER CUSTOMIZABLE REPORTING

Examiner: Nathan Hillery

Group Art Unit: 2176

Attorney Docket No.: LOT920030068US1 (7321-022U)

**TRANSMITTAL OF APPEAL BRIEF**

Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents

Commissioner for Patents

P.O. Box 1450

Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Submitted herewith is Appellant's Appeal Brief in support of the Notice of Appeal filed January 11, 2008. As this Appeal Brief has been timely filed within the shortened statutory period of two months from the date of the filing of the Notice of Appeal, no extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is required. Notwithstanding, please charge any shortage in fees due under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17, 41.20, and in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 12-2158, and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Date: March 11, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

/Steven M. Greenberg/

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**APPEAL BRIEF**

Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

This Appeal Brief is submitted in support of the Notice of Appeal filed January 11, 2008, wherein Appellant appeals from the Examiner's rejection of claims 8-21.

**I. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST**

This application is assigned to International Business Machines Corporation by assignment recorded on November 24, 2003, at Reel 014739, Frame 0562.

**II. RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES**

Appellant is unaware of any related appeals and interferences.

### **III. STATUS OF CLAIMS**

Claims 8-21 are pending in this Application and have been twice rejected, claims 1 through 7 having been withdrawn from consideration in response to the restriction requirement of January 25, 2007. It is from the multiple rejections of claims 8-21 that this Appeal is taken.

### **IV. STATUS OF AMENDMENTS**

Claims 8 and 15 had been amended previously in response to the non-final office action dated April 30, 2007 (hereinafter, the "Non-Final Office Action").

### **V. SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER**

Independent claims 8 and 15 are respectively directed to a method for the generation of a user customized report, and a computer-readable storage medium storing a computer program which when executed performs a method for the generation of a user customized report.

In accordance with the Appellants' invention, a method for the generation of a user customized report includes retrieving a specified template for producing a desired report (Par. [0022] and determining from the specified template a set of parameters required to produce the desired report (Par. [0023]). For each parameter in the set, a screen can be selected for providing a user interface through which a value can be established for the parameter (Par. [0024]). Thereafter, business rule enforcement logic can be embedded in the selected screen (Par. [0025]). Specifically, the business rule enforcement logic can enforce business rules for accessing data in a database (Par. [0025]).

Finally, the method can include saving each of the selected screens in a report definition configured to produce a report (Par. [0028]) while executing the embedded business rule enforcement logic to enforce the business rules in respect to values established for corresponding ones of the parameters in the set (Par. [0032]). In this way, a customized generation of a report definition can be provided through a data driven application without requiring knowledge of the business rules associated with the data driven application. Yet, the user customizable reporting tool can permit the complete customization of the report definition by the end user as would ordinarily be the case with a stand alone reporting tool

## **VI. ISSUES TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL**

Claims 8 through 21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0165936 by Alston et al. (Alston) in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0049749 by Helgeson et al. (Helgeson).

## **VII. THE ARGUMENT**

### **THE REJECTION OF CLAIMS 8 THROUGH 21 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(A) AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER ALSTON IN VIEW OF HELGESON.**

For convenience of the Honorable Board in addressing the rejections, claims 9-14 stand or fall together with independent claim 8 and claims 16-21 stand or fall together with independent claim 15.

Presently, exemplary claim 8 reads as follows:

8. A method for generating a user customized report comprising the steps of:
  - retrieving a specified template for producing a desired report;
  - determining from said specified template a set of parameters required to produce said desired report;

for each parameter in said set, selecting a screen for providing a user interface through which a value can be established for said parameter, and **embedding business rule enforcement logic in said selected screen**, the business rule enforcement logic **enforcing business rules for accessing data in a database**; and,

saving each of said selected screens in a report definition configured to produce a report while executing said embedded business rule enforcement logic to enforce the business rules in respect to values established for corresponding ones of the parameters in the set..

Similar limitations appear in independent claim 15. Integral to claims 8 and 15 is the embedding of business rule enforcement logic in a selected screen so as to enforce business rules for accessing data in a database. So much is expressly recited in each of claims 8 and 15. These limitations, however, are nowhere to be found in the cited combination of Alston and Helgeson.

The Examiner concedes on page 4 of the Final Office Action dated October 11, 2007 (hereinafter, the "Final Office Action") that Alston fails to teach the embedding of business rule enforcement logic in a selected screen so as to enforce business rules for accessing data in a database. Notwithstanding, on page 4 of the Final Office Action, the Examiner relies expressly and singly upon paragraph [0772] of Helgeson in arguing that Helgeson cures the deficiency of Alston. Specifically, the Examiner states,

Helgeson et al. teach that Model pages are responsible for producing an XML representation of the content of the page. This content typically comes from executing complex business logic (e.g. running database queries) ... which meet the limitation of the business rule enforcement logic enforcing business rules for accessing data in a database.

For the convenience of the Honorable Board, paragraph [0722] is reproduced herein in its entirety with emphasis added.

[0772] Model pages are responsible for producing an XML representation of the content of the page. This content typically comes from **executing complex business logic** (e.g., running database queries, exercising business APIs, etc.). Although model pages (being XSP pages) are capable of including programming logic, including a large amount of code in an XSP page makes it hard to maintain. To solve this problem Web Content Server 800 introduces an implementation of the Command pattern (Gamma et al.). A developer can invoke a command from a model page by using the execute Web Content Server 800 tag library tag. For example, the following line

```
<wdktags:execute manager="CatalogCommandMgr" command="search"/>
```

Despite Examiner's argument, it is apparent to the Appellants that nothing in paragraph [0772] suggests the "enforcement of business rules". The Examiner seems to want to equate the "execution of business logic" with the "enforcement of business rules" however the mere presence of the word "business" in the phrase "business logic" is not sufficient to conclude that business logic is "business rules". More importantly, the notion of "enforcing" rules is not present at all in paragraph [0772]. Yet, to properly maintain a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the Examiner must find every limitation literally or by inference to be present in the cited reference. In that the "enforcement" of rules cannot be found in either Alson or Hegelson, the Examiner cannot support a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Based upon the foregoing, Appellant respectfully submit that the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for obviousness based upon the applied prior art are not viable. Appellants, therefore, respectfully solicit the Honorable Board to reverse the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Date: March 11, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

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## **VIII. CLAIMS APPENDIX**

1. (Withdrawn) A user customizable report generator comprising a configuration for attachment to at least one database through at least one reporting tool, the generator comprising:
  - at least one set of pre-established screens for defining at least one value for a corresponding database parameter specified within a report template;
  - a communicative coupling to at least one business rule;
  - business rule enforcement logic disposed within each of said pre-established screens, said logic comprising programming for processing session state information to assist in enforcing said at least one business rule; and,
  - a report generation component coupled to said set of pre-established screens and programmed to generate a report definition based upon parameters in a report template and a selection of said pre-established screens for each of said parameters.
2. (Withdrawn) The report generator of claim 1, wherein each of said screens comprises markup language configured for rendering in a content browser and encapsulating script logic for execution in said content browser.
3. (Withdrawn) The report generator of claim 1, wherein each of said screens comprises a Java server page (JSP).
4. (Withdrawn) The report generator of claim 1, wherein said at least one business rule comprises an access control rule conditioned upon session state information accessible within each of said pre-established screens.

5. (Withdrawn) The report generator of claim 4, wherein said session state information comprises information selected from the group consisting of an identity of an end user, a time of day, a date, and a network address for said end user.
6. (Withdrawn) The report generator of claim 1, wherein said report definition comprises a specified ordering of said selection of said pre-established screens for each of said parameters.
7. (Withdrawn) The report generator of claim 1, wherein said report generation component further comprises logic for producing a report based upon said report definition.
8. (Previously Amended) A method for generating a user customized report comprising the steps of:
  - retrieving a specified template for producing a desired report;
  - determining from said specified template a set of parameters required to produce said desired report;
  - for each parameter in said set, selecting a screen for providing a user interface through which a value can be established for said parameter, and embedding business rule enforcement logic in said selected screen, the business rule enforcement logic enforcing business rules for accessing data in a database; and,
  - saving each of said selected screens in a report definition configured to produce a report while executing said embedded business rule enforcement logic to enforce the business rules in respect to values established for corresponding ones of the parameters in the set.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of storing an order of presentation for said selected screens in said report definition.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, further comprising the steps of:  
retrieving said report definition;  
rendering each of said selected screens in said stored order;  
collecting parameter values for said parameters in said set through said rendered screens while limiting said parameter values according to said embedded business rule enforcement logic; and,  
generating said report based upon said collected parameter values.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said collecting step comprises the steps of:  
identifying session state data through said rendered screens;  
processing said session state data to limit data input through form fields in said screens;  
and,  
accepting data input through said form fields to establish said parameters.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein said processing step comprises the steps of:  
identifying an end user through said session state data;

limiting a range of data which can be accessed in said report based upon an identity of said end user as processed through said embedded business rule enforcement logic; and, reflecting said limited range of data through data input restrictions applied to said form fields in said screens.

13. (Original) The method of claim 10, further comprising the step of saving said report for subsequent reuse.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, further comprising the steps of:  
loading said saved report;  
determining session state data for an end user loading said saved report;  
applying at least one business rule comparable to a business rule reflected in said embedded business rule enforcement logic to said session state data; and,  
modifying said saved report to enforce said at least one comparable business rule.

15. (Previously Amended) A machine readable storage having stored thereon a computer program for generating a user customized report, the computer program comprising a routine set of instructions which when executed by the machine cause the machine to perform the steps of:

retrieving a specified template for producing a desired report;  
determining from said specified template a set of parameters required to produce said desired report;

for each parameter in said set, selecting a screen for providing a user interface through which a value can be established for said parameter, and embedding business rule enforcement logic in said selected screen, the business rule enforcement logic enforcing business rules for accessing data in a database; and,

saving each of said selected screens in a report definition configured to produce a report while executing said embedded business rule enforcement logic to enforce the business rules in respect to values established for corresponding ones of the parameters in the set.

16. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 15, further comprising the step of storing an order of presentation for said selected screens in said report definition.

17. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 16, further comprising the steps of: retrieving said report definition; rendering each of said selected screens in said stored order; collecting parameter values for said parameters in said set through said rendered screens while limiting said parameter values according to said embedded business rule enforcement logic; and, generating said report based upon said collected parameter values.

18. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 17, wherein said collecting step comprises the steps of: identifying session state data through said rendered screens;

processing said session state data to limit data input through form fields in said screens; and,

accepting data input through said form fields to establish said parameters.

19. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 18, wherein said processing step comprises the steps of:

identifying an end user through said session state data;

limiting a range of data which can be accessed in said report based upon an identity of said end user as processed through said embedded business rule enforcement logic; and, reflecting said limited range of data through data input restrictions applied to said form fields in said screens.

20. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 17, further comprising the step of saving said report for subsequent reuse.

21. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 20, further comprising the steps of: loading said saved report; determining session state data for an end user loading said saved report; applying at least one business rule comparable to a business rule reflected in said embedded business rule enforcement logic to said session state data; and, modifying said saved report to enforce said at least one comparable business rule.

## **IX. EVIDENCE APPENDIX**

No evidence submitted pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.130, 1.131, or 1.132 of this title or of any other evidence entered by the Examiner has been relied upon by Appellant in this Appeal, and thus no evidence is attached hereto.

## **X. RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX**

Since Appellant is unaware of any related appeals and interferences, no decision rendered by a court or the Board is attached hereto.